

Melancon [Requested](#) Secretary-Level Review of Disaster
April 30, 2010

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“What we saw today in our flight over the oil slick was very sobering. Our meetings with local and state officials responding to the scene were equally somber. Louisiana’s fragile coastline and ecosystem faces a grave threat, and until BP can turn off the well, conditions will continue to deteriorate.

“Our situation in south Louisiana is critical, and I thank Secretary Napolitano, Secretary Salazar, and Administrator Jackson for heeding my request to immediately evaluate the response and containment efforts in person. While this is BP’s mess, the federal government has a responsibility to the people of Louisiana to offer any assistance or expertise that might prevent this disaster from worsening.

“While all our focus right now must be on mitigating this environmental disaster, we must also begin preparing for the economic effects the oil spill will have on Louisiana’s critical fishing industry. One third of our nation’s seafood depends on Louisiana’s wetland habitats, and fishing is central to our economy and way of life in south Louisiana. Disaster funding must be available to help stand up this critical industry so it

can continue to feed our country.”

Wednesday, Congressman Melancon [requested](#) Secretary Napolitano and Secretary Salazar immediately review the current response and containment efforts to the oil rig disaster. In his [letter](#), Congressman Melancon urged the Cabinet secretaries to evaluate how the containment and clean-up efforts could be accelerated in order to minimize damage to Louisiana’s fragile coastline and fishing grounds.

The Deepwater Horizon platform was located 50 miles off the coast of Venice, which is in Louisiana’s Third Congressional District.

Thursday, Congressman Melancon returned to Louisiana from Washington to help coordinate the emergency response efforts. He traveled to Plaquemines Parish to meet with local officials and make sure they have the resources they need to prevent further damage to Louisiana’s fragile coastline.

Congressman Melancon also [contacted](#) the Secretary of Commerce and the head of NOAA’s Fisheries Service yesterday urging them to prepare to direct disaster funding to Louisiana’s commercial and recreational fishermen. In his letter, Congressman Melancon noted that the oil intrusion resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil rig disaster would likely damage the fragile habitats on which Louisiana’s fishermen, oystermen, and shrimpers depend. Congressman Melancon’s letter can be viewed online [here](#).

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